

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 16820

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO, OVIP (KOMER, ROBERT)
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR KOMER VISIT: MEETING WITH MOD OFFICIALS

1. AT A SEPTEMBER 7 MEETING WITH MOD SECRETARY GENERAL MOIZO AND
HIGH-RANKING MOD OFFICIALS, AMBASSADOR ROBERT KOMER:

--STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF INCREASING THE NATO
INFRASTRUCTURE BUDGET, AND NOTING THAT ITALY TRADITIONALLY
RECEIVES MORE FROM THE INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM THAN IT
PUTS IN, ASKED FOR ITALIAN SUPPORT FOR THE INCREASES.

--URGED THE ITALIANS TO SUPPORT THE LTDP FOLLOW-THROUGH
PROCEDURES AND REQUESTED MOD TO PROVIDE ITALIAN REPS IN
BRUSSELS FLEXIBILITY IN RESPONDING TO THOSE PROCEDURES.
KOMER SUGGESTED THAT IN THOSE INSTANCES WHERE ITALY,
BECAUSE OF CURRENT ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES, COULD NOT
AGREE TO INCREASED EXPENDITURES, IT APPROVE THE
PROGRAM IN PRINCIPLE BUT RESERVE ON ITALY'S
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INITIAL LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION.

-- REITERATED THE STRATEGIC ADVANTAGES OF AWACS.

--PLED FOR ITALIAN COOPERATION IN STANDARDIZING
ALLIANCE MILITARY EQUIPMENT, NOTING THE DEFENSE
AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS STANDARDIZATION PROVIDES TO

ALL ALLIES. KOMER UNDERLINED THE "FAMILY OF WEAPONS" CONCEPT AS THE MOST RATIONAL MEANS OF ACHIEVING GREATER ALLIED COOPERATION IN THIS FIELD.

2. GEN. MOIZO AND HIS COLLEAGUES NOTED THE INCREASING COSTS ITALY MUST BEAR FOR US AND NATO FACILITIES IN THIS COUNTRY. UNDER THE TERMS OF THE US-ITALIAN BILATERAL INFRASTRUCTURE AGREEMENT, OF 1954, ITALY MUST PROVIDE FREE OF COST BASE FACILITIES, ACCESS, UTILITIES AND SUPPORT PERSONNEL. KOMER SUGGESTED THAT ANY NEW FACILITIES BE FUNDED UNDER INFRASTRUCTURE RULES WHICH WOULD COST ITALY CONSIDERABLY LESS. ITALIANS WERE RECEPTIVE TO THAT SUGGESTION BUT ADDED THAT LAND ACQUISITION FOR NEW FACILITIES WAS A DIFFICULT MATTER, BOTH POLITICALLY AND MONETARILY.

3. MOIZO URGED THE UNITED STATES TO BE MORE FLEXIBLE, MORE FORTHCOMING IN THE TRANSATLANTIC DIALOGUE. EUROPEANS, HE NOTED, MUST SPEND MORE TIME DIVIDING THE MILITARY PROCUREMENT/ PRODUCTION PIE AMONG THEMSELVES THAN SHOULD BE NECESSARY UNDER OPTIMAL CIRCUMSVANCES; NEVERTHELESS, THAT NEGOTIATING PROCESS WAS A FACT OF LIFE AND COULD NOT BE GREATLY SPEEDED UP. BOTH ECONOMIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL RETURNS NEEDED TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE DIALOGUE.

4. ON AWACS ITALY NEEDED SOME QUICK, VISIBLE EVIDENCE FROM THE US THAT SOME OF ITS PROGRAM EXPENDITURES WOULD BE OFFSET.
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A FIGURE OF 5-10 MILLION DOLLARS WAS MENTIONED. SUCH A SUM WOULD ASSIST DEFENSE MINISTER RUFFINI IN OBTAINING AWACS APPROPRIATIONS FROM THE ITALIAN PARLIAMENT. KOMER URGED THE ITALIANS TO PROPOSE SPECIFIC OFFSET ITEMS ON AWACS TO SECRETARY BROWN AND DR. PERRY WHEN MINISTER RUFFINI MEETS WITH THEM NEXT WEEK IN WASHINGTON. MOIZO AGREED, AND SAID THAT ITALIANS HAD SEVERAL PROGRAMS IN MIND. (SEE ROME'S LETTER TO BEIGEL (EUR-WE) OF AUGUST 2 FOR ITALIAN PROPOSALS ALONG THIS LINE.)

5. ITALIANS AGREED ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE LTDP FOLLOW-THROUGH PROCEDURES AND THE STRATEGIC ADVANTAGES OF AWACS.HOLMES

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